

CCDA Bill Tracking Report

Text Summary

AB 1521(Author: Committee on Judiciary)

Current Status: 7/16/15 From committee chair, with author's amendments: Amend, and re-refer to committee. Read second time, amended, and re-referred to Com. on JUD.

Current Location: 7/16/15 S-JUD.

Existing law provides that individuals with disabilities or medical conditions have the same right as the general public to the full and free use of the streets, highways, sidewalks, walkways, public buildings, medical facilities, public facilities, and other public places, and allows a person who is aggrieved or potentially aggrieved by a violation of specific provisions of law to bring an action to enjoin the violation. Existing law requires an attorney to provide a written advisory with each demand letter or complaint, as defined, sent to or served upon a defendant or potential defendant for any construction-related accessibility claim, as specified.

This bill would require the above-described advisory to include additional information regarding the rights and obligations of business owners and commercial tenants, as specified. In addition to the written advisory, the bill would require an attorney to provide a defendant or potential defendant of a construction-related accessibility claim with an answer form developed by the Judicial Council, which would allow a defendant to respond in the event a complaint is filed, as specified. The bill would, on or before July 1, 2016, require the Judicial Council to update the advisory form and adopt the answer form, as specified.

Existing law authorizes commencement of an action for damages against persons who interfere with these access rights, including, but not limited to, actions against owners and tenants of property for construction-related barriers.

This bill would, with certain exceptions, require the owner of property to which the general public is invited to indemnify a microbusiness tenant, as defined, from liability arising from any construction-related accessibility claims, as specified.

This bill would require that the attorney, or the party in cases where the party is not represented by counsel, certify that specified conditions have been met, including, but not limited to, that the action is not being presented primarily for an improper purpose, such as to harass or to cause unnecessary delay. By expanding the definition of the crime of perjury, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

~~Existing law entitles the prevailing party to recover reasonable attorney's fees.~~

~~This bill would, instead, require the court to award costs and reasonable attorney's fees to a prevailing plaintiff, and to award court costs and reasonable attorney's fees to the defendant if the court finds that the plaintiff's case is clearly frivolous.~~

~~This bill would, with certain exceptions, require a person who is represented by an attorney and has filed more than 15 lawsuits that allege construction-related accessibility violations against places of public accommodation within the prior 12-month period, to seek and obtain approval of the court with respect to settlement of the case.~~

Existing law authorizes a defendant to file a request for a court stay and an early evaluation conference in the proceedings under certain circumstances, and tolls the period for responsive pleadings.

This bill would specify that these provisions also apply if a defendant is a business that has been served with a complaint filed by a high-frequency litigant, as defined, or is a business requesting an

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early evaluation conference.

Existing law, upon the filing of an application for a court stay and an early evaluation conference by a defendant, requires the court to immediately issue an order that does certain things, including, but not limited to, scheduling a mandatory early evaluation conference for a date as soon as possible from the date of the order, but in no event later than 70 days after the issuance of the order.

This bill would, if requested by the defendant, require the court order to direct the parties and their counsel to meet at the premises, or other place as specified, no later than 30 days after issuance of the court order, to jointly inspect the premises, and review any programmatic or policy issues, that are claimed to constitute a violation of a construction-related accessibility standard.

Existing law requires that an allegation of a construction-related accessibility claim in a complaint state facts sufficient to allow a reasonable person to identify the basis of the violation, including, but not limited to, a plain language explanation of the specific access barrier or barriers the individual encountered, or by which the individual alleges he or she was deterred.

This bill would, for cases filed by or on behalf of a high-frequency litigant, require the complaint to also state that the complaint is filed by, or on behalf of, a high-frequency litigant, the number of complaints alleging a construction-related accessibility claim that the high-frequency litigant has filed during the 12 months prior to filing the complaint, and the reason why the individual visited the place of public accommodation.

~~This bill would become operative only if Senate Bill 251 of the 2015-16 Legislative Session, relating to disability access, is enacted on or before January 1, 2016.~~

Existing law imposes a supplemental fee for filing first papers in certain civil proceedings, including, but not limited to, certain complex cases.

This bill would, in addition to the first paper filing fee, require payment of a single high-frequency litigant fee at an amount established by the Judicial Council, not to exceed \$1,000, at the time of the filing of the first paper if the complaint alleges a construction-related accessibility claim and the plaintiff is a high-frequency litigant, and would make conforming changes related to the distribution of those fees.

Existing Constitutional provisions require a statute that limits the right of public access to meeting or writings of public officials to be adopted with findings demonstrating the interested to be protected by that limitation and the need to protect that interest.

This bill would declare that it includes limitations on access, that the interests to be protected are the privacy rights of the litigants, and that the need to protect those interests is to prevent a chilling effect on litigation.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Vote: majority-2/3 . Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: yes.

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AB 1342(Author: Steinorth, Marc)

Current Status 8/17/15 S-APPROPRIATIONS

Current Location 10 a.m. - John L. Burton Hearing Room (4203) LARA, Chai

(1) Existing law requires the State Architect to establish and publicize a program for the voluntary certification by the state of any person who meets specified criteria as a Certified Access Specialist (CASP). Existing law requires each applicant for CASp certification or renewal to pay certain fees, and requires the State Architect to periodically review those fees, as specified. Existing law provides for the deposit of those fees into the Certified Access Specialist Fund, which is continuously appropriated for use by the State Architect to implement the CASp program.

This bill would require applicants for CASp certification or renewal to additionally provide to the State Architect information about the city, county, or city and county in which the applicant intends to provide or has provided services, and would require the State Architect to post that information on his or her Internet Web site.

(2) Until December 31, 2018, existing law requires any applicant for a local business license or equivalent instrument or permit, or renewal of a local business license or equivalent instrument or permit, to pay an additional fee of \$1 for that license, instrument, or permit. Under existing law, the city, county, or city and county that collected the fee retains 70% of the fee, and the remaining 30% of the fee is deposited into the Disability Access and Education Revolving Fund, a continuously appropriated fund. *Existing law requires each local entity collecting the fee to make an annual report on the fees to the Legislature and to the chairs of specified committees, as specified.*

This bill would extend the operation of those provisions indefinitely. By increasing the revenue deposited into a continuously appropriated fund, this bill would make an appropriation. *By extending the duties of local governments with respect to the reporting of specified fees, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.*

(3) Existing law requires a commercial property owner or lessor to state on every lease form or rental agreement executed on or after July 1, 2013, whether the property has been determined by a CASp to meet all applicable construction-related accessibility standards.

This bill, for every lease form or rental agreement executed on or after July 1, 2016, would require the commercial property owner or lessor to provide the lessee or tenant with a current disability access inspection certificate and inspection report or a copy of a CASp inspection report, or would require a statement on the form or agreement that, upon request of the lessee or tenant, the property owner may ~~permit~~ *not prohibit* a CASp inspection of the subject premises at the lessee's or tenant's expense and that the parties must mutually agree on the arrangements for the time and manner of the inspection.

(4) Existing law establishes the California Commission on Disability Access for purposes of developing recommendations to enable persons with disabilities to exercise their right to full and equal access to public facilities and facilitating business compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Existing law sets forth the powers and duties of the commission, including, but

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not limited to, developing educational materials and information for businesses, building owners, tenants, and building officials, posting that information on the commission's Internet Web site, and coordinating with other state agencies and local building departments to ensure that information provided to the public on disability access requirements is uniform and complete. Existing law provides that those provisions shall not remain operative unless funds are appropriated for those purposes.

This bill would additionally require the commission to provide a link on its Internet Web site to the Internet Web site of the Division of the State Architect's CASp certification program and to make the commission's educational materials and information available to other state agencies and local building departments. The bill would also appropriate the sum of \$120,000 from the General Fund to the commission for the 2015-16 fiscal year for the purpose of establishing 2 permanent outreach coordinator positions.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: 2/3. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: ~~no~~-yes .

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SB 251 (Author: Roth, Richard)

Current Status: 7/17/15 Failed Deadline pursuant to Rule 61(a)(10). (Last location was REV. & TAX on 7/14/2015)

Current Location: 7/17/15 A-2 YEAR

1) Existing law prohibits discrimination on the basis of various specified personal characteristics, including disability. The Construction-Related Accessibility Standards Compliance Act establishes standards for making new construction and existing facilities accessible to persons with disabilities and provides for construction-related accessibility claims for violations of those standards. Existing law requires that a demand letter alleging a violation of a construction-related accessibility standard or asserting a construction-related accessibility claim include specified information, and that copies of the demand letter be sent to the ~~California Commission on Disability Access and the State Bar of California~~. Existing law repeals the requirement that a copy of a demand letter be sent to the State Bar of California on January 1, 2016.

This bill would extend the above-described January 1, 2016, repeal date, to January 1, 2019.

Existing law requires that a copy of the demand letter and the complaint be sent to the California Commission on Disability Access.

This bill would, in addition, require that information about the demand letter and the complaint be submitted to the commission in a standard format specified by the commission.

(2) Existing law ~~requires a certified access specialist (CAsp), upon completion of an inspection of a site, to issue a written inspection report for the site, as specified. Existing law provides, upon being served with a summons and complaint asserting a construction-related accessibility claim, that a defendant may file a request for a court stay and early evaluation conference in the proceedings, as specified. Under existing law, a defendant is liable for actual damages plus minimum statutory damages for each instance of discrimination. specifies that a violation of construction-related accessibility standards personally encountered by a plaintiff may be sufficient to cause a denial of full and equal access if the plaintiff experienced difficulty, discomfort, or embarrassment because of the violation.~~

This bill would provide that a business, prior to the initiation of litigation, receipt of a demand letter, or ~~a business that is otherwise on notice of a violation of a construction-related accessibility standard prior to a CAsp inspection, is not liable for minimum statutory damages for violating a construction-related liability standard if the violation is corrected within 90 days of the date of an inspection by a CAsp. The bill would also provide that a small business is not liable for minimum statutory damages for an alleged violation if the violation concerns interior or exterior signage, the color and condition of parking lot paint striping, or truncated domes and is corrected within 15 days of service of a summons and complaint in a construction-related accessibility claim or receipt of a written notice, whichever is earlier. exclude certain technical violations from the scope of this provision, if specified conditions are met.~~

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(3) Under existing law, a defendant is liable for actual damages plus minimum statutory damages for each instance of discrimination relating to a construction-related accessibility standard.

This bill would exempt a defendant from liability for minimum statutory damages with respect to a structure or area inspected by a certified access specialist for a period of 120 days if specified conditions are met. The bill would require a defendant who claims the benefit of this provision, to disclose the date and findings of any certified access specialist (CASp) inspection to the plaintiff.

~~(3) Under existing federal law, a landlord and tenant are both responsible for compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and implementing regulations. The parties to a lease agreement may allocate responsibility by the lease or other contract. Existing law requires a commercial property owner or lessor to state on every lease form or rental agreement executed on or after July 1, 2013, whether the property has been inspected by a CASp and, if so, whether or not the property has been determined to meet all applicable construction-related accessibility standards. This bill would require a commercial property owner to state on every lease form or rental agreement executed on or after January 1, 2016, that the owner or lessor and the tenant are both responsible for compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and that responsibility for compliance may be allocated between the parties by the terms of the lease or other contract.~~

(4) Existing law requires the State Architect to establish and publicize a program for the voluntary certification by the state of any person who meets specified criteria as a CASp. Existing law requires the State Architect to annually publish a list of CASps. Existing law requires each applicant for CASp certification or renewal to pay certain fees, and requires the State Architect to periodically review those fees, as specified. Existing law provides for the deposit of those fees into the Certified Access Specialist Fund, which is continuously appropriated for use by the State Architect to implement the CASp program.

This bill would additionally require the State Architect to publish, and ~~periodically~~ *regularly* update, an easily accessible list ~~lists~~ of businesses *that file prescribed notices of inspection, and businesses* which have been inspected by a CASp on or after January 1, 2016, including the date of the inspection. *The bill would require the State Architect to develop a process by which a small business may notify the State Architect that a structure or area has had a CASp inspection and to develop a form for businesses to notify the public that the business has obtained a CASp inspection.* The bill would also require applicants for CASp certification or renewal to additionally provide to the State Architect the name of the city, county, or city and county in which the applicant intends to provide or has provided services, and would require the Division of the State Architect to post that information on its Internet Web site.

(5) Existing law establishes the California Commission on Disability Access for purposes of developing recommendations to enable persons with disabilities to exercise their right to full and equal access to public facilities and facilitating business compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Existing law sets forth the powers and duties of the commission, including developing educational materials and information for businesses, building owners, tenants, and building officials, posting that information on the commission's Internet Web site, and coordinating

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with other state agencies and local building departments to ensure that information provided to the public on disability access requirements is uniform and complete.

This bill would additionally require the commission to provide a link on its Internet Web site to the Internet Web site of the Division of the State Architect's CASp certification program, and make the commission's educational materials and information available to other state agencies and local building departments.

(6) The Planning and Zoning Law establishes procedures for the application, and review of an application, for a development project. Existing law requires a public agency to notify applicants for development permits of specified information, including the time limits established for the review and approval of development permits.

This bill would additionally require local agencies to develop and provide to applicants materials relating to the requirements of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, or to instead provide similar materials developed by the California Commission on Disability Access. The bill would require a local agency to notify an applicant that approval of a permit does not signify that the applicant has complied with that act. The bill would also require local agencies to expedite review of projects for which the applicant provides a copy of a disability access certificate, demonstrates that the project is necessary to address an alleged violation of a construction-related access standard or a violation noted in a CASp report, and, if project plans are necessary for approval, has had a CASp review the project plans for compliance with all applicable construction-related accessibility standards. The bill would declare that these provisions constitute a matter of statewide concern and shall apply to charter cities and charter counties.

By imposing additional duties on local agencies with respect to the receipt and review of applications for development projects, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(7) Existing federal law allows a credit against federal income taxes for eligible small businesses for eligible access expenditures, as those terms are defined, in an amount equal to 50% of eligible access expenditures for a taxable year that exceed \$250 but do not exceed \$10,250. The Personal Income Tax Law and the Corporation Tax Law allow a credit against the taxes imposed by those laws for the amount paid or incurred for eligible access expenditures in an amount equal to 50% of eligible access expenditures for a taxable year as do not exceed \$250, as specified.

This bill would, for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2016, and before January 1, 2023, allow to small businesses, as defined, a credit under both the Personal Income Tax Law and the Corporation Tax Law for eligible access expenditures in an amount equal to 50% of eligible access expenditures for a taxable year, as specified.

(8) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these

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statutory provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: yes.